1:Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1954 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

chiefs and district headmen, were in undifferentiated charge of people. With the formal introduction of Native Courts came provision for the systematic review of judicial decisions by the Administration. To do this some kind of written record was necessary. Many chiefs could not write and court clerks had to be appointed. At the same time the posts of councillor and assessor were created, the former to assist the chief in his executive and legislative capacity as a Native Authority, the latter to help him in his judicial capacity and to constitute with him the Native Court. Messengers[19] were employed to preserve order in court, serve summonses, make arrests and restrain the violent. Under the Ordinances, the Native Authority has power to make rules and orders on a variety of subjects, subject to confirmation by the Administration. The Native Courts are competent to enforce these rules and orders, as well as to administer 'tribal law' and certain items of Administrative legislation delegated to them. They can impose fines or sentences of imprisonment or whipping. In civil cases they can award damages, and charge a hearing fee, but the Ngoni do not distinguish between the fee and a fine.

In 1938 an Ngoni Native Treasury was established and a treasury clerk appointed to run it. After a few years the Administration transferred a larger share of general revenue to the Native Treasury and increased the activities for which the Native Authority was responsible. At one time much of the finance of the Ngoni Native Authority School, opened in 1938, was handled by the Native Treasury, though this was largely a matter of book-keeping. The Native Authority assumed responsibility for the construction and maintenance of roads through the reserves, the care of wells and dams constructed by the Administration, and the provision of messengers to act as police at the lorry-checking points on the main roads. More recently it has become responsible for ghee production, for a demonstration farm and for a nursery of fruit trees. It has had to arrange finance for new school buildings and county granaries and to build these by direct labour. To handle the money for these enterprises there has been a treasury clerk and, recently, an assistant who also helps with the collection of Native tax. The Native Treasury acts as accountant for all these activities but the extent to which the Administration, in one guise or another, directs their carrying out varies considerably.

The revenue for the Treasury is derived from a share in the Native tax, from the sale of licences for dogs, bicycles, arms,

[19] Usually known by the vernacular term *kapasi* in distinction to the district messengers employed directly by the Administration.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
FR5 Ngoni FR5

105 621 senior men who related to me historial events, family geneologies, war-songs and other Ngoni traditional knowledge, including the ideas and methods of bringing up Ngoni children. In the evenings the schoolboys gathered by my hut to [124] [191] practise their English, to discuss their school work and their plans for the future. The tsetse menace had for some time been threatening the cattle and losses were considerable. The boys wanted above all to emigrate and find work so that they could earn money to send home to their fathers to buy more cattle, pay taxes, buy clothes, guns and ammunition, for it was lion country.

Out of the thirty-one households in the village, twenty- [162] [592] five belonged to the men of Ngoni clans. There were nine elderly widows of Ngoni leading families, and of the younger women eighteen were true Ngoni. There was therefore both among the men and the women, and in the senior and younger age-groups, a high proportion of those who were true Ngoni and who practised the Ngoni way of living. It was a village where Ngoni cultural patterns were very much in evidence, and where the school and the church, representing modern developments, were closely integrated with village life.

Emcakateni was just off a main road and as easily acces- [361] sible as Enkodlweni was remote. It was perched on a hill-top in a commanding position, and was much larger, with a hundred and twenty-two households compared with thirty-one. There were several kraals and many cattle, no tsetse menace, but lions in the neighbourhood which more than once attacked the kraal at night. Outsiders, that is of non-Ngoni clans, who had money, had married into the chief's and other leading families, and these households possessed well-built brick houses. I lived in a grass-and-pole hut in- [342] side a fence, near the compound of the big house. There was [871] no school in the village, and the nearest one was run by a [797] mission disliked by the leading Ngoni. The boys spent all their time with the cattle, or hunting or practising crafts.

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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Africa. All males had to pay taxes to the government, at first in kind and later in cash, thus hastening the advent of a money economy. Most drastic of all the changes was the ban on warfare, which cut at the roots of Ngoni political organization, and at their system of training their young men.

In the Northern Ngoni kingdom, the Scottish Mission preceded the administration by more than twenty years, and were largely responsible for a peaceful take-over of the area. In the Central kingdom there was a brief war of resistance, in which the Ngoni armies were dispersed and the Paramount killed on his way to trial. In this area mission activity, under several missions, never achieved, especially in education, the ascendancy which the Scottish Mission achieved among the Ngoni in the North.

As one result of the cessation of warfare, and of school education leading to paid employment, there was an economic redistribution of wealth among the Ngoni. Formerly wealth had been associated with political power, and the Paramounts and their subordinate chiefs and heads of clans had command of large herds of cattle, received the spoils from wars and raids, and used the labour of conquered villages to cultivate the land. After the missions and government were established, men with schooling began to earn money as teachers, clerks and mechanics, and so to command financial resources which were not available to the traditional leaders. The young men responded to the labour recruitment which became a permanent feature in Nyasaland from the 1890s, and they went far afield to many types of work.

It was evident, just before World War II, that the Ngoni kingdoms had had a profound shock from which they never fully recovered, in spite of the recognition of their Paramount Chiefs by the Native Authorities Ordinance in 1934. The older men looked back with nostalgia to what they called 'the time of peace, when the Europeans were not here to trouble us'. These older men were known as 'the generation of former days', because they had taken part in warfare

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177 561 464 The cessation of warfare, the coming of schools and of a money economy, the urge to find wage-earning work and the opportunities offered by the labour recruiters to emigrate —these were a series of events which radically altered the prospects and outlook of young men. The effect of schooling, [871] [434] [583] if taken seriously, and most Ngoni fathers saw that their sons at least attended regularly, was to equip boys of sixteen or seventeen or even younger to go and get wage-earning jobs. This urge to earn money, in addition to meeting demands for taxes, was strengthened because the cattle to be handed over at marriage had now to be bought from other herds, or at least eventually replaced by purchase, instead of, as formerly, being captured in war. The young men therefore felt that [885] earning money was essential, and finding a job was regarded as a sign of manhood in much the same way as joining a regiment had been. After warfare ceased, and taking the headring was given up as a mark of full manhood and mature status, there was no longer any probition on marriage until [582] a certain age had been reached. The limiting factors in the age of marriage became economic ones instead of military and social ones. Young men whose fathers were able to provide the cattle for the marriage transfer, were able to marry from the age of about eighteen upwards, build huts for their wives, escape from living a bachelor existence in the dormitory, and then go off and find work by emigrating, if no [167] wages which they considered adequate were to be earned in the neighbourhood. These young men then could emerge from the group known as 'youths' at any age from eighteen upwards as soon as they married. If they left the village to find work before they married, they left from and returned to the dormitory, and were still known as youths. Their emigration after marriage, usually after the wife was pregnant and they had 'put a child in the hut', presented the picture familiar in areas such as Enkodlweni of villages almost stripped of their young men, and of young wives living alone in their huts among their husband's relations. The practice of

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schools, in sermons by Ngoni ministers in the churches. Fathers gathered their children together, boys and girls, on such occasions, and said to them: 'Listen. Do you hear? This is about our people from the beginning. Remember well. Do not forget, for the Ngoni cannot forget their past.'

A young man of about twenty related to me how his father, the head of a leading clan, used to talk to him about the Ngoni past when they went on hunting trips together on Mount Choma, where Paramount Mbelwa and his Ngoni had first settled in Northern Nyasaland. In among the dry grass the father showed the boy the sites of former villages, the polished floors and the sturdy door-posts of the huts, and the stumps of the kraal fences. He heard in that historical setting the story of one of the famous secessions from the main Ngoni kingdom. 'Early one morning,' said his father, 'we woke up, we who remained, and we saw that Ciwere had gone. All the people shouted "Ciwere has separated from us. He has separated indeed. Our Paramount is poor because of his departure."'

It was largely through their own efforts that the Ngoni succeeded in teaching their history to their children in the schools. More than one Ngoni leader who had been educated by the Scottish Mission began writing the history of his own people, and in their villages I found several young men recording in writing the traditions as told them by their grandfathers. One Ngoni minister, Rev. Y. M. Cibambo, for twenty years systematically recorded and checked and compared these traditions. His books in the local vernacular were used as readers in the mission schools, and later translated into English as *My Ngoni of Nyasaland*.

Sermons in church by Ngoni ministers not only referred to historical events which were illustrated in songs or recorded in oral traditions but to the role of the famous diviners, called prophets, 'dreamers of the head', who foretold the advent and manner of arrival of the Europeans. The Ngoni Christian leaders went further than this. They used the

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tion. In all the selection of individuals to 'enter the place' of an important person who had died, the new holder of the place had to measure up to Ngoni personality standards and be acknowledged as a 'good character'.

The new kinds of occupation open to Ngoni men as a result of education in the mission schools were of two main types: those where the holders of the job still lived in the Ngoni kingdom and carried on their work in the setting of a Ngoni village; and those which involved leaving the village and living and working outside Ngoniland, more or less out of sight and out of control of Ngoni elders.

Some of the mission teachers, ministers, and evangelists returned to live in Ngoni villages after they had completed their training, though others of course were posted elsewhere. In one of the villages described in Chapter I there had been in the early days of mission work fierce and continuous opposition to the opening of schools, as well as to the preaching of Christianity. I mentioned the old evangelist who had been threatened with death by the chief when he first took up his work. If he had left under those threats he would have lost out for ever among his people, for he would have been called a coward. He stayed, cultivated his land, grew his own food, was a great hunter, was respectful to the chief and elders, brought up his children to respect Ngoni traditions. He gradually gained the reputation of being brave, a 'gentle' man, a powerful and fluent speaker in the church on Sundays, a man of wisdom and judgement, and he was constantly asked for his opinion on village affairs. Most of the village, Christian and non-Christian alike, went to the church service on Sundays, sang the Ngoni hymns, listened to his sermons in the Ngoni language, sprinkled with Ngoni proverbs and illustrated by episodes from Ngoni life and history. Very few people in that village over twenty-five years old were Christians, but the leading Ngoni families allowed him to baptize younger and older children and to instruct them in Sunday-school. The Ngoni elders contributed to the

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church funds in cash or in kind, and helped to build the church and school.

The younger headmaster of the school had never been threatened with death. He came in on the tide of recognition and respect accorded to the character and behaviour of the evangelist. His grandfather, like the evangelist's father, had been a well-known warrior with his own praise song celebrating his exploits. When the chief saw the exemplary behaviour of the headmaster and his Ngoni wife, listened to some of the lessons in school, watched the boys 'drill' in the playground, he ordered all Ngoni boys and girls in the village to attend school, and arranged a roster for cattle-herding, so that the boys would learn herding as well as their school lessons. He sent for the headmaster to report to him periodically on how the children were behaving, and which ones were showing particular aptitudes. The young headmaster showed characteristic Ngoni ability to organize his school, control his staff, demand and get good behaviour from the children. He was, like the evangelist, a huntsman of repute, and he was too a good dancer, and had a judgement in public affairs that was acknowledged to be beyond his years.

The aversion shown in the other Ngoni village described in Chapter I to schools and to missions generally arose partly from the fact that there were no Ngoni teachers or ministers serving that area. The teachers in near-by schools were from a tribe whom the Ngoni despised and whose personal habits they deplored. The missions in the area had made no attempt to integrate schoolteaching and preaching in the churches with Ngoni life and thought. Some Ngoni fathers sent their boys to the Scottish Mission boarding-school in Blantyre, and were willing to pay the fees because they knew and believed in those in charge of that school.

Ngoni fathers, and this was true of both areas, expected their boys who had been to school and had entered European employment away from their homes, to find work which assured them a superior and not an inferior or unskilled

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position. They wanted them to be, or to become, senior clerks, trusted store assistants, valued houseboys, foremen in charge of other men, hospital assistants. They wanted them, in other words, to be in positions where Ngoni traits would be appreciated, and where good behaviour and self-control, ability to supervise others, responsibility and initiative, obedience to orders, would be recognized and rewarded.

In conclusion here is a record of a conversation I heard in the village of a very senior chief, so senior that he was given the title of *Inkosi* when his subjects addressed him. The chief, who was then in his seventies, but active and vigorous, was sitting in a chair on the veranda of his hut, out of the sun's glare, with several of the senior men of the village behind him. Two young teachers in charge of a school came to greet him. They bent one knee as they squatted in front of him, as they had been taught to do as children, gave him the customary greeting, and waited in silence till he spoke.

'How is your school?'

'The classes are full and the children are learning well, *Inkosi*.'

'How do they behave?'

'Like Ngoni children, *Inkosi*.'

'What do they learn?'

'They learn reading, writing and arithmetic, scripture and geography and drill.'

'Is that education?'

'It is education, *Inkosi*.'

'No! No! Education is *very* broad, *very* deep. It is not only in books, it is learning to live. I am an old man. When I was a boy I went with the army to the Bemba war. Then the mission came and I went to school. I became a teacher. Then I was a chief. I have seen this country change, and now the young men go away to work. I tell you Ngoni children must learn how to live, and how to work and earn money, and how to build up our land. *Uyezwa na?*' (Do you hear?)

'*Yebo Inkosi*.' (Yes, O chief.)

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
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they find dirt and untidiness compel the people to turn out and sweep the village, and rebuild their houses.

Education is spreading at a great rate, and there are fifty schools already established among the people with about 7,000 scholars in attendance. These pay fees for their attendance. And so great is the thirst for reading that last year more than 4,000 volumes were bought by the people.

A Christian church is rapidly growing up, and at certain religious seasons a great congregation of over 7,000 people may be seen gathered from all quarters.

Yet it would be a pity if with this inrush of new life the old tribal characteristics were lost in a wretched caricature of European methods. There is nothing more slovenly than a lithe athletic African dressed in European cast off clothing, or more repulsive than a lad trying to be an Englishman when he should be an Ngoni proud of his nationality. And this is one of the most serious problems that is constantly before us, to guide this people in their formative period, that in the end they may not be denationalised, and made hideous and ridiculous in a distorted and unnatural mould, to preserve all national customs which are not evil in themselves and yet evolve a people honest, industrous, intelligent, and Christian, who will have some harmonious and beautiful part to take when the world's orchestra is filling up to play its symphony of peace and prosperity.